

# Butcher determined to improve Hibs' home record



Hibs boss Terry Butcher was aware that the team's home form hadn't been great before his arrival, but he didn't know that they had only won two league games in the whole of 2013 in front of the Easter Road supporters.

The former England captain however realises the importance of a good home record and is determined to improve on what has happened in the past.

Former caretaker manager Jimmy Nicholl believed that certain players were intimidated playing in front of the frustrated Hibs' fans as any mistake was met by abuse from the stands, so rather than try something productive, they would settle for the safe pass.

Butcher is aware of this and is determined to change the mindset as he explained at the club's press conference ahead of this Saturday's game against Partick Thistle, which will be his first time on the home dugout.

"I can't affect what's happened in the past, that record won't change, but we want to make it three on Saturday by playing as well as, if not better than, the way we've played in the first two games.

"It's just eleven men against eleven men, green pitch, white lines, two goals. It doesn't matter what's around the outside. The fans can make it really noisy, which is what we want. But the players are the ones that are going to go out there and play and win. It's important that they're the confident ones and they're in the right frame of mind to go out and do just that.

“We want this to be a hostile place to come to for the opposition, and to do that we’ve got to give our fans something to get behind,” he added. “I’ve talked about the players enjoying playing here and enjoying playing for Hibs. Enjoy the challenge but don’t be afraid to get out there and be positive.”

The conference was held at Easter Road rather than the East Mains Training Centre due to a power cut which left the players unable to have a full workout, although they did have a session indoors. Today they will train on the Easter Road pitch, but Butcher revealed that he had planned to do so in any case.

He continued: “Being here raises excitement levels for Saturday but I was toying with the idea of coming here anyway, irrespective of the weather.

“The players haven’t been back out onto the pitch since the Caley Thistle game which they lost 2-0 and sometimes you need to get out there again quickly. It’s like falling off a bike – they say you should get back on again as quickly as possible. Having won only two home games in 2013, you think ‘let’s try everything we possibly can to get rid of that statistic’.

Tomorrow Butcher will attend the ceremony in memory of former manager Dan McMichael in the Eastern Cemetery ahead of the game. McMichael was the last Hibs’ manager to win the Scottish Cup, and members of the St Patrick’s Branch of the Hibernian Supporters Club have raised money to buy a headstone in his honour after discovering that he was buried in an unmarked grave.

The stone will be unveiled by Hibs’ legend Pat Stanton and all supporters are invited to attend. The ceremony starts at 11.30am.